



Karen Hernandez, the author of “The Maze of the Mind,” is a junior majoring in Biology on the pre-med track at UTA.

My hobby has always been art, and I have always tried to experiment with different mediums, including digital art. This was my first finished digital art piece. I am an advocate for people with mental illness as this topic is still stigmatized in society, which prevents many patients from getting the help they need. I personally have many friends and family who have experienced a time when they had issues with their mental health, such as anxiety and depression. Many of whom have not received any help because of the stigma surrounding mental illness. Physicians need to be able to connect with their patients to help their patients get the care they need, and this should include mental illness.

Uchechi Etumnu, the author of “Curtain: The Other Side,” graduated in 2021 with a degree in Biology from UTA.

Hello there! My name is Uchechi Etumnu. I graduated from UTA in Fall 2021 as a Biology major with a passion for healthcare and education. I was also previously involved in the AMAZING Mavericks for Medical Humanities Spring 2020 - Fall 2021 as one of the founding officers. Being a doctor can be a challenging process, but being a Black, female doctor is even more challenging. Although it is hard, it is never impossible. Therefore, I wrote a poem called “Curtain” to encourage anyone who has ever struggled with their career goals because of discrimination due to their ethnicity, faith, gender, or socioeconomic status, as well as any other experiences that may have occurred. This is dedicated to you. You are seen. You are loved. Never give up or quit on your dreams.



Sandy Hobart, the author of “Prioritizing Wellness: My Personal Wellness Plan,” is a Health Professions Advisor at UTA.

Hello! My name is Sandy Hobart and I am the Health Professions Advisor at the University of Texas at Arlington, my alma mater. My work experience includes 5+ years in pharmacy and 6+ years in Higher Education, including time as a Program Chair. I also co-teach and coordinate the Pre-Medical Preceptorship class and Chair the Health Professions Advisory Committee. My connection to UTA and background in healthcare provides a unique perspective for my pre-health students. I want students to learn from the mistakes I made in undergrad and have an understanding of the healthcare field they are planning on pursuing.

I value student development in and out of the classroom because I want students to succeed post-graduation. I enjoy sharing my life experiences, so students understand it is ok to struggle and they do have the ability to overcome challenges. Life does not always go the way you want! Trust me. Witnessing students grow personally and achieve their goals is the best part of my job! As the eldest sibling of 3 girls, I am known as the “independent, tom-boy.” I play video games and love sports, especially football. I am the commissioner of my Fantasy Football League. Being a single mother to a 6-year-old boy (and all my students) has forced me to improve my organizational skills and patience! I can be very blunt at times, but I promise I mean well. Honesty and communication are very important to me, and I appreciate constructive intellectual debates. I am always open to the perspectives of others. Different perspectives often lead to the best ideas and learning opportunities. Life can get stressful, and I enjoy providing motivation for others so if you need to talk, I am here!

Shakyra Silva, the author of “Never a Task, But a Person,” is a sophomore majoring in Nursing and minoring in Medical Humanities & Bioethics on the pre-med track at UTA.

I had originally been very focused on the medical science side of medicine. However, when picking an elective course for the fall of 2021, I stumbled upon a biomedical ethics course. Through that course I learned more about the humanities side of medicine and started to appreciate it and its importance more. I now plan to not only focus on the medical science side of medicine but also focus on the humanities side of medicine. I hope learning more about medical humanities will help me be a better future nurse and eventually a better future physician.



Kayode Aremu, collaborative author of “PIVOT” and creative director of “Hidden Pieces: Capturing impression void of expression,” graduated in 2021 with a degree in Biology from UTA.

I am currently taking a gap year before medical school to participate in genetics research at UTA. Enamored by nature, you will either catch me rock climbing with a camera or making sand angels in the dunes. The raw and untamed yet serene spectacles of the outdoors soothe my spirit. I draw inspiration from diverse experiences growing up in Lagos

and now living in Texas. I use my camera as an extension of myself, focusing on matters words cannot express accurately—matters of humanities and those affecting minorities in the United States. The inspirations for “PIVOT” and “HIDDEN PIECES” stem from my Nigerian roots, experiences in my community, and my optimism in the future of medicine. Fascinated by the ability of artists like Banksy, TY Bello, and Adeola Olagunju to shape culture and tell stories from different perspectives, being behind the

camera feels like home to me. Focusing on empathy, inclusion, and individualized care; I hope our work helps illuminate blind spots in medicine and our enthusiasm to join the fight. I am so grateful to the models (Ololade and Abolade Aremu) for their patience, vulnerability, and incomparable ability to bring this vision to life. Collaborating with great friends and artists like Ololade Aremu and Mayur Bhakta was truly an honor.

Mayur Bhakta, collaborative author of “PIVOT,” is a senior majoring in Biomedical Engineering and minoring in Biochemistry at UTA.

Growing up in an immigrant family in Zimbabwe and later moving to the United States, I have been exposed to a myriad of cultures and views of medicine. As an aspiring healthcare professional, the perspective I have gained has greatly influenced the direction of my intended career. I thoroughly enjoyed drawing from my life experiences, premedical journey, and understanding of racial disparities in healthcare to compose the second half of Kayode Aremu's portrayal of the issue. Through works like our poem and service directly in the medical field, we hope to see an increase in cultural competency among healthcare providers and delivery of equitable care. We hope you absorb the message and appreciate the juxtaposition of the two parts of the poem.



Ololade Aremu, collaborative author of and model for “Hidden Pieces: Capturing Impression Void of Expression,” graduated in 2021 with a degree in Biology from UTA.

I am currently an employee at UTA and hope to someday make an impact in the healthcare field as a physician. Hence, this work resonates so much with me, for me the importance of diversity in medicine cannot be overemphasized. An immigrant myself, having grown up in Nigeria where healthcare and physicians were neither accessible nor affordable, it has always been a personal mission of mine to make a difference. I had always thought this was only a problem where I grew up, but as a Black woman and immigrant in America I have come to realize that couldn't be further from the truth. Music and art are forms of expression that I have always believed have the power to reach places in us and convey messages that words sometimes cannot. As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. Therefore, I was very excited to work on this piece with Kayode Aremu, and we hope that the message from artworks like these can make an impact on and reach people that words cannot.

Dr. Sarah A. Shelton, the author of “Fatphobia in Healthcare: A Fat Studies Perspective and Reading List,” is a Senior Lecturer and the Coordinator of Social Media for the Department of English at the University of Texas at Arlington where she teaches composition and literature.

My research interests include the materiality of classrooms and of reading and writing processes, posthumanism, posthumanist pedagogy/education, composition and writing studies, feminism, fat studies, and disability theory (to name a few). My work in disability and fat studies has been published in *Fat Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Body Weight and Society*. I hold a BA in English from UT Austin and an MEd in Teaching and PhD in English from UTA.



Gabrelle Kelley, the author of “You Can Still Hold On,” is a senior at UTA majoring in Kinesiology.

I am a UTA student and I love art but my major doesn't allow me to be as creative as I would like to be so I thought this journal would be a great way to exercise my creativity. My artwork has always been a hobby and being able to create something gives me peace of mind. I chose cardboard and tinted charcoal for this piece because I haven't had much practice with any medium other than paint and I thought it would be fun to experiment with. I drew this piece because I want to work with amputees in the future and I know a few people with limb differences so I wanted to highlight and celebrate them.



Angie Gonzalez, the author of “The Power of Literacy”, is a junior majoring in Psychology and minoring in Neuroscience, Biochemistry, and Medical Humanities & Bioethics at UTA.

As an aspiring physician, first-generation student, and daughter of Mexican immigrants, I'm incredibly passionate about tackling healthcare disparities and providing underprivileged communities with optimal healthcare and opportunities.





Maleah Galvan, the author of “Life and Growth in All Forms, Within the Soul,” is a junior majoring in Nursing and Public Health and minoring in Psychology at UTA.

I am currently a student at UTA pursuing a double major in Nursing and Public Health, as well as a minor in psychology. When I first started at UTA I had the idea that my sole purpose of learning the field of medicine should be to provide perfect care. As I began to learn more, I realized that health care is about so much more than treating physical symptoms. Overall health is composed of mental, social, emotional, and physical aspects. As such, my goal is to become a healthcare professional that not only treats their patients well, but also provides them with cultural humility and respect. In my free time, I also run a small crafting business. My main creative focus is to express the beauty of life and the human body. As a result, I make many unique pieces of all shapes and sizes to represent the diversity of the human form.

Navvin Sadarangani, collaborative author of “Mid-Level Providers May Solve Healthcare Shortages In Underserved Communities,” is a senior majoring in Kinesiology at UTA.

As a pre-PA student who’s applying to PA programs this year, I wanted to shed light on how impactful the Physician Assistant profession is to underserved communities that don’t receive the same quality of care as their adequately served counterparts. I frequently volunteer and work in medical settings in both underserved communities and privileged communities, and I see the disproportionate amount of care some communities receive compared with others. I hope to provide insight into how mid-level providers, such as PAs, can bridge the gap between these communities so that nobody must go without quality healthcare.



Randy Ramirez, collaborative author of “Mid-Level Providers May Solve Healthcare Shortages in Underserved Communities,” graduated in 2021 with a degree in Exercise Science from UTA.

I’m currently completing post baccalaureate coursework before applying to physician assistant school for the 2021-2022 cycle. I’m a frequent volunteer at the Mission Arlington Clinic and donation center. Witnessing how mid-level providers at the Mission Arlington Clinic have been able to do much good for the underserved inspired me to write this essay. My main hope is that this essay can shed some light onto often misunderstood roles of mid-level providers.

Serena Karim, the author of “Reading Between the Lines,” is a freshman majoring in Nursing and minoring in History at UTA.

As a strong advocate for the medical humanities, I hope to pursue a History minor and a certificate in Spanish interpretation alongside my BSN. I am also involved with Bioethics research through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. In my career as a nurse practitioner, I hope to fall back on the humanities to bridge cultural, linguistic, and relational gaps between patients and caregivers. My hobbies include reading, painting, attending concerts, and playing the marimba.



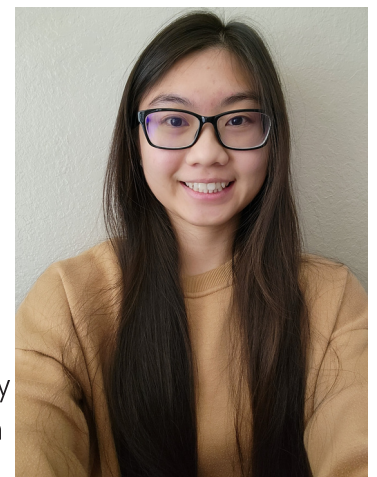
Rebecca Bruton, the author of “Aging out of Healthcare,” is an undergraduate pre-med student in the Biochemistry department at UTA.

I returned to school in 2019 to pursue a second bachelors after teaching special education for a number of years. I chose the medical path, in part, due to the lack of disability representation in the medical field and to help change the way adults with disabilities experience healthcare. I hope to shed light on the

many health disparities faced by adults in the disability community and to help shorten the gap in quality healthcare for this population.

Theresa Huynh, the author of “Care Beyond Medicine,” is a non-degree-seeking transfer student at UTA with intentions of going to graduate school.

This was a therapeutic way for me to express the passing of my grandmother whom I lost in March 2022. This excerpt was a different take on the impact of healthcare and how different components of humanistic interactions affect everyone involved. One thing I realized with each loss I’ve gone through is that I may never shake nostalgia, but with practice and time, feelings of loss are slowly replaced with love. To all who have dealt with, are dealing with, or will deal with loss, take it one day at a time. Understanding how you feel will allow you to slowly recognize what you need. And with time, you’ll heal. From a veteran, the void does get smaller and your heart will soon feel warmer, so don’t give up. Never forget that there’s always a light shining at the end of the tunnel. Just because you can’t see it yet, doesn’t mean that it doesn’t exist.





Ignazio Previto, the author of “An Aptitude for Tranquility: Float,” is a senior majoring in Biology at UTA.

I have a dream to work in the medical field, but a strong passion for the arts. The photo, *An Aptitude for Tranquility: Float*, was taken at the beginning of spring break after going through a considerable number of midterms. To take our minds off class, I went out with a friend, and took to the water; the lake was incredibly tranquil, and the air was crisp. What I captured in the moment of this photo represents exactly what I was feeling at the time: the awe-striking sublimity of nature. Through this piece I hope to inspire the viewer to live in the present moment and enjoy the world around you.

Anna Nguyen, the author of “The Relationship Between the Biopsychosocial Model and Autism Spectrum Disorder,” is a junior majoring in Biology and minoring in Biochemistry and Neuroscience at UTA.

My dream is to become a Neurologist! The brain is very interesting to me, and I am very fascinated by how it works. My article is on research I have done on the relationship between autism and the biopsychosocial model. This paper is very special to me because I have two family members who have autism and who were my inspiration for researching this area. The biopsychosocial model helped me gain a deeper understanding of the disorder. If you are curious about autism, I highly recommend looking at the papers I have cited in addition to doing your own research to see what you find. I have been researching autism since middle school, and I still have a lot to learn about this disorder.



Ami Patel, the author of “Mind and Body,” is a sophomore majoring in Public Health and is currently an officer in the Mavericks for Medical Humanities organization at UTA.

Drawing has been a hobby of mine since I was little. My goals for the future are to graduate from UTA, further my education with a master’s degree in Public Health, and work in a public health career. I hope to learn more about health issues and diseases that come with population.

Megan Norris, the author of “What If You Were Still Here Now?,” is a senior majoring in Biology and minoring in Medical Humanities and Bioethics at UTA.

I graduated from Weatherford Community College with an associates of Science degree in 2019. In August of 2019, I started my journey as a Maverick at UTA. My goal is to apply to Medical School in the Fall and start next August. The inspiration behind my piece that I have shared is about my son, John, who passed away in 2017. He has become my purpose for everything I do. He continues to push me forward. I wrote this submission in hope of reaching anyone who has lost someone very close to them, as these are hard times. This piece means a lot to me as I am finally able to put into words the thoughts that run through my mind on a daily basis.



Asma Saleh, the author of “The Art of ADHD,” is an undergraduate majoring in History at UTA.

With my painting, I wanted to highlight the constant movement and change that occurs in the mind of one who has ADHD. On the right side of the painting, I used abstract mediums and inconsistent flows and presses of the brush. On the left side, the art is much neater and has clear imaging. This represents the right and left hemispheres of the human brain, its creative and logical sides. Someone with ADHD often has constant activity buzzing through their mind and will move from one task to another even without completing the first one. Therefore, the portrait has not two sides, but four, since the brain is constantly firing neurons about multiple things all at the same time.

Michael Paul Lewis, author of “Fluoroquinolone Toxicity: From Mysterious Internet Illness to My New Reality — A Memoir of My Bout with Levofloxacin,” graduated in 2016 with degrees in Biological Chemistry and Spanish from UTA. He is currently a research assistant at UT Southwestern Medical Center studying breast cancer and a post-baccalaureate student at UNT studying Biology.

I was born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras; however, I have lived the majority of my life here in the DFW area. In my free time, I love playing piano, trying new cuisines, and most of all, studying foreign languages, such as Spanish, French, and Portuguese. I currently hold a position in the Harold C.



Comprehensive Cancer Center at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas, researching the epigenetic reader, Bromodomain-containing protein 4 (BRD4), and its role in triple-negative breast cancer formation, development, and metastasis. I would like to apply to medical school one day and become a physician-scientist to help find cures for some of the most devastating and obscure diseases known to mankind, much like the one that afflicted me many years ago as a new UTA graduate and which this memoir is about. With my short story, I hope to educate readers about *fluoroquinolone toxicity*, so they can make more informed decisions regarding their health and the health of others and, ultimately, effect positive change in the medical field, either as a student, patient, or provider as far as fluoroquinolone administration, pharmacovigilance, and “floxie” patient advocacy is concerned.



Teresa Vu, collaborative author of “something comforting,” is a senior majoring in Biological Chemistry at UTA.

As a graduating senior majoring in Biological Chemistry, I am currently pursuing a career in medicine. Throughout my 4 years at UTA, I was fortunate enough to encounter the Medical Humanities program, which has given me a whole new perspective on holistic, patient-centered care. I hope to be a vital asset in providing care for my patient, physically, mentally, and emotionally. As a first-generation college student, I am inspired by my parents to fulfill the American Dream they envisioned for me. When my father and uncle were battling cancer, they spent a good

amount of time in the hospital/hospice. I witnessed their triumphs and tribulations, physical and mental. I witnessed fear in their eyes when doctors told them of their prognosis and hearing their pain when the cancer was hurting more than usual that day. But in the end, I could feel their peace in their hearts when they were surrounded by their loved ones. They were my inspirations for this poem. I hope to translate to the reader how human connection and compassion goes beyond horizons to heal and comfort a patient. Practicing holistic medicine is essential; valuing the patient’s needs in all aspects is vital. Having someone there for you truly heals the soul inside. Having my friend Jessica collaborate with me on this piece made it 10 times more special. The Medical Humanities program at UTA has been such an eye-opening asset to our journey in pursuing medicine, and we are honored to be able to contribute a piece in this journal.

Jessica Pham, collaborative author of “something comforting,” is majoring in biological chemistry at UTA.

Growing up, my family always gave back to the community whenever they could, and I thought it was very inspiring. I don’t think I truly found my passion until recently, when I became more active in my clubs and volunteered at different events. I want to be able to provide healthcare to underprivileged communities either through free pop-up clinics, or Doctors Without Borders. Teresa, my co author, came up with the wonderful theme and idea behind this poem, and we definitely stepped out of our comfort zones with this piece. I only know how to write lab reports nowadays so I definitely had to search up a



lot of simple things like grammar. We wanted there to be a huge contrast in tone between the scenes before and after his wife walks in to emphasize the importance of compassion and human connection.



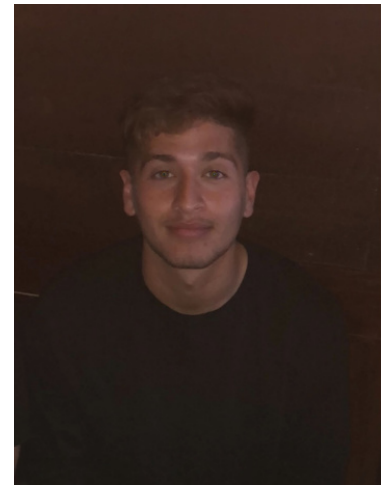
Isabella Moreno, the author of “Our Red Sun,” is a senior majoring in Biology and minoring in Dance at UTA on the pre PA track.

I have always loved everything regarding the human body whether that is science related, or dance related. That being said, I have always enjoyed having creativity in my life, whether that comes from dance, music, photography, or drawing. The reason why I chose this picture was because of how beautiful it looked. The camera doesn't even capture all of its beauty, but I have it ingrained in my memory and it's my favorite picture I've taken thus far. Sunset and sunrise have the meaning of a new, fresh day and an end to a day, respectively. My inspiration for this piece is to portray how we are different from one another, yet we all share so much in common. Many of us

are in school with a goal, something we all share, but the goal itself is what sets us apart, something different. We are each our own person, but we are all people at that, and should be treated as such in any environment.

Eric Rios, the author of “The Reality of Barriers to Specific Populations of Pre-Health Students,” graduated in 2021 with degrees in Exercise Science, Clinical Health Route, and with a minor in Psychology at UTA.

I am a first-generation nontraditional UTA alumnus who is on a pre-PA track. My passion stems not only from the path that I've chosen but also from being an advocate and shedding light on overlooked and overshadowed populations in healthcare, both patient and student-wise. I also hope to one day take part in empowering PAs—aiding in the growing profession- and exploring the opportunities and possibilities, while adhering to adequate boundaries, to unlock untapped potential for PA's all around.



Anna Tarpley, the author of “Hope,” is a senior majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies in Biology and Classics at UTA.

My studies focus on the relationship between philosophy and science. I love to play violin, especially when I'm fiddling alongside my 6 younger siblings. When I'm not fiddling, I can be found reading great literature (especially Dostoyevsky), painting, or gardening at my home in south Fort Worth.

Dr. Jason V. Terk, MD, the author of “The Dimming of Shining City,” is a Pediatrician in Keller.

I am a Distinguished Consultant with Cook Children’s Physician Network and practice in Keller with my 5 pediatrician colleagues. I am a passionate advocate for vaccines and past chair of the Texas Medical Association Council on Legislation. I also advocate for vaccines through the Texas Medical Association Foundation Be Wise, Immunize program. I am past-president of the Texas Pediatric Society and serve on its Executive Legislative Committee and Committee on Infectious Diseases and Immunizations. I also serve on the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Federal Government Affairs and am the current chair of the Texas Public Health Coalition.



Audrey Williams, the author of “Insecurity,” is an oil painter based in Dallas, Texas. She is a recent BFA graduate from the University of Texas at Austin.

I use the female portrait to challenge stereotypes in art, media, and culture. I currently study mental health counseling as a graduate student at Southern Methodist University. As an advocate for the healing powers of art and aesthetics, I aspire to become an art therapist. I seek to create imagery that represents some of the unseen trauma within my community and shed light on alternate forms of beauty that contradict societal standards.



Dana Johnson, the author of “The Day I Decided to Chase the Sun,” is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the Dallas–Fort Worth area.

Hello, my name is Dana Johnson and I am a practicing Licensed Professional Counselor in the DFW area. I am not a UTA student- but was made aware of this journal through a friend who is. I am very passionate about my professional career, and chose to write about something that impacts me regularly. Eating disorders are everywhere — my office, my family, in society. This is what I intended my piece to show: the struggle of hiding from the thing that keeps us alive- and the process of healing. It can be discouraging recovering from something like this, because “the voice” never really goes away. The poem is about the power we give the voice,



and our own willingness and motivation to stay alive. I am hopeful the use of symbolism here encourages readers to find a connection in their own life, so they, too, can chase the sun.



Anthony Pham, the author of “Rawr,” is a first-year medical student at Texas Tech University Health Science Center College of Medicine.

Growing up as a son of two Vietnamese refugee parents, my family has always been the motivation behind what I aspire to be. Through them, I am able to write my own story; one where I continue to look up to my parents as a source of inspiration, give back to my community, and one where I will always remember my origins, for they have shaped me into who I am today. I hope I can one day share my own story with others, in hopes that they aspire to make the best out of difficult situations. Close your eyes. Take a breath. Enjoy the moment. Seldom do we take a moment to enjoy our lives to the fullest especially with the constant stressors of work, school, and

adulting responsibilities. This writing is a reminder for me to take in every bit of life that time has to offer while celebrating a special holiday in my culture. I hope you all enjoy.

Amal Eltahir Ali, the author of “It Takes Two,” is a junior Biology major with a Medical Humanities & Bioethics minor at UTA.

I have observed all my life how many people emphasize the importance of the logical and analytical aspect of medicine and healthcare. Additionally, I have thought that doctors were the only ones involved in the diagnosis process of a patient. But, after being introduced to Medical Humanities in my Sophomore year of university, my perspective shifted. I realized that the humanities are just as important in medicine and that doctors are not the only ones partaking in diagnosing a patient. Being educated on Medical

Humanities, I concluded that doctor-patient relationships are the basis and the starting point of Medical Humanities and medicine/healthcare itself. I painted “It Takes Two” to exactly illustrate this. The painting is an illusion with one side painted to show a doctor and the other side (while holding it upside down) a patient. I specifically chose to create an illusion because it demonstrates a deeper understanding of needing both doctor and patient for the painting to work, similar to reality. The ultimate takeaway is that there needs to be two (the doctor and the patient) communicating, interacting, and listening for anything to begin.





Darashagam Nahal, the author of “Sikhism in the United States of America: On Cultural and Social Ignorance,” is a sophomore Biology major at UTA.

I believe that cultural competence is an incredibly significant part of bioethics and the medical humanities. Being culturally competent not only allows us to become better human beings, but also prepares us to be the best possible future healthcare providers. Cultural competence has no limit, and we should always try to learn more about other cultures. My intention behind my work was to spread more awareness about the Sikh community in the United States. As a Sikh, myself, I want other people to understand who I am and where I come from.

Dr. Steven Gellman MD, MFA, the photographer of “Shoreline Spirituality,” is the founder of the Medical Humanities program at UTA. He became an educator of humanities within the Philosophy Department at UTA after retiring from his career as a physician in family practice.

I am a physician, teacher, and advisor; however, when people ask who I am — I am a photographer. Ever since I could hold a camera, here is where my creative spirit lives and my passions are unleashed. I have always been drawn to the shoreline as my constant source of spirit and inspiration. My lab Roma and I are here, at this place where I find respite, inspiration, and spirituality.



Karyssa Nelson, the author of “The Five Stages of Grief: After You’re Gone,” is a UTA alumnus who graduated with an honors degree in Psychology with a minor in Biology and a certificate in the Medical Humanities in Fall 2021.

I found a love for the creation of music early in life. I wrote my first song in elementary school, using playdates to create make-shift choirs and bands to perform the symphonies I heard in my head. I have since written dozens of songs and participated in compositional and vocal competitions both on my own and as part of choirs through my early college years. As a recent UTA graduate, I now work in the psychiatric unit of a pediatric hospital

as I take a gap year before applying to medical school. Grief, trauma, and loss are ever-present themes in each encounter with my patients. Now more than ever, I rely on music to be my release and use it as a tool to connect with and relate to my patients and their families. I wrote this piece with the hope that those working through grief may find catharsis and comfort in experiencing the universal stages of human emotion through music.

Joshua Cupps, the author of “Prayer Rug,” is a senior Biomedical Engineering major and is the current president of the student organization, Mavericks for Medical Humanities.

"Prayer Rug" is a poem I wrote at the beginning of Ramadan, a Muslim holy month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community. I was inspired by the connectedness I felt with friends who have helped guide me along this path and to this new spiritual community, especially as we drew nearer to Ramadan. As someone who has recently embraced Islam, I dedicated this piece to my prayer rug, which has become an important place in my life and journey. I chose to write this piece and personify this object because of the deep ritual and personal importance it has in my heart.

